

CLAIMS

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1. ~~A character input keyboard in which characters or letters can be input by~~
typing without sight of a keyboard with the index fingers, the middle fingers,
the third fingers, the little fingers of operator's right and left hands being
5 lightly rested on eight character's or letter's home keys in a middle key-array,
respectively, and the thumbs of its right and left hands being lightly rested on
central portions in a lowermost key array as fingers' home positions for finger
operation in touch-typing on the keyboard, characterized in that said keyboard
is provided with a pair of right and left front keys centrally juxtaposed in said
10 lowermost key array at the front and the middle of said operator, said front
keys being located so as to be directly depressed by the respective thumbs
rested at thumbs' home positions of finger operation, respectively, one of the
centrally juxtaposed right and left front keys being allocated to a front
ENTER/RETURN key and the other to a SPACE key as a normal state of the
15 keyboard, whereby direct enter/return operation by either of thumbs rested at
thumbs' home positions is physically possible.
2. A character input keyboard as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that it
can be optionally preset before actual use by an operator which of the right and
the left front keys to be allocated to a front ENTER/RETURN key and a SPACE
20 key, or whether both of the right and the left front keys to a SPACE key.
3. A character input keyboard as claimed in any one of claims 1 and 2,
characterized in that it is based on a 101/104 English keyboard except that it is
provided with said pair of centrally juxtaposed right and left front keys and
either of said front keys is allocated to a front ENTER/RETURN key.
- 25 4. A character input keyboard as claimed in any one of claims 1 and 2,
characterized in that it is based on a 106/109 Japanese keyboard of JIS
Japanese syllabary key-arrangement type except that it is provided with said
pair of centrally juxtaposed right and left front keys and either of said front
keys is allocated to a front ENTER/RETURN key.

5. A character input keyboard as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 4, characterized in that the existing ENTER/RETURN key at the extreme right of the upper and/or central row in the middle key-array is replaced by a BACKSPACE key and/or other operational key or symbol keys of high frequency.
6. A character input keyboard as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 5, characterized in that said keyboard is separated or foldably divided into right and left halves, said pair of the right and left front keys functioning as either of a ENTER/RETURN key and a SPACE key being included in said right and left halves thereof, respectively.